

MEETING MINUTES

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts

March 10, 2015

9:30 AM

Two Hundred and Ninety-Third Meeting

In Attendance: Mr. David Rowlett, President; Mr. Shane Wells, Vice-President; Mr. Allan Bryant, Secretary-Treasurer; Mr. Kevin Jeffries; Mr. Gilbert Edgington; Mr. Orville Bennett; Mr. Lenville Martin; Mr. Bobbie Wilson; Mr. Rod Murphy; Mr. Ted Jessup; Mr. David Cowherd; Mr. Jeff Rice; Ms. Betty Barrick, KACD Auxiliary; and Ms. Beverly Buchanan, Warren Co. Conservation District.

Also in Attendance: Director Kim Richardson, DOC.

Quorum was met.

Meeting Called to Order - at 9:31 am by KACD President David Rowlett.

KACD Minutes of the Last Meeting - February 10, 2015 - Mr. Rod Murphy made a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Kevin Jeffries seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

Treasurer's Report - Treasurer Allan Bryant presented the KACD Treasurer's Report with copies given. Mr. Bryant made the motion to approve the report as presented. Motion seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.** Director Kim Richardson, DOC, presented a four hundred dollar (\$400) purchase request for ten (10) Biltmore sticks, at a cost of ten (10) dollars each, and ten (10) compasses, at a cost of twenty-five (25) dollars each. This equipment would be used for the Envirothon competition and would be retained by KY DOC. The money would be taken from Envirothon funds. Mr. Allan Bryant made the motion to approve this purchase. Motion seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.** Mr. Bryant also stated that he was contacted by Ms. Teri Shaw, Franklin County Conservation District, with a request for a two hundred and fifty dollar (\$250) donation from the KY 4-H Foundation. Mr. Bryant made the motion to approve this request. Mr. Jeff Rice seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

KACD Correspondence - Director Kim Richardson, DOC, reported that the Department of Agriculture reaffirmed their commitment to continue as a sponsor of Envirothon.

NACD Director's Report - Mr. Kevin Jeffries presented the NACD Director's Report. Mr. Jeffries began by stating that Mr. Jeff Hall was confirmed yesterday by the Senate to serve on the Farm Credit Administration Board.

The NACD transition team is currently in search of a new CEO. Mr. Lee McDaniel has set up an HR committee, with Mr. Jim Herald as the Chairman, to conduct interviews for this position. At present Mr. Jeremy Peters is acting as interim CEO.

The Southeast Regional NACD Convention is going to be held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Tupelo, MS this year on August 2nd - 4th.

Mr. Jeffries requested an updated e-mail address from all board members so that he could get pertinent SE NACD information out to them in a timely manner. A signup sheet was circulated for this purpose.

Mr. Jeffries discussed the recent proposal within NRCS regarding transitioning decisions that state conservationists are currently able to make, at the local level, and placing these in the hands of the national office in Washington. Mr. Jeffries will supply information addressing this issue to President Rowlett to help prepare those scheduled to attend next week's NACD Fly-In to Washington, DC.

Appropriation request numbers came out last week for conservation operations and NACD's request for the 2016 budget. Mr. Jeffries will give a copy of this report to President Rowlett detailing the breakdown of these figures.

NACD Foundation Committees: Newly-elected President Lee McDaniel has made new appointments and reappointments. Mr. Jeff Rice along with Mr. Jeffries will serve on the Legislative Committee. Mr. Jeffries was also appointed to both the Auction and Scholarship Committees. Ms. Karen Woodrich, NRCS, was selected for the District Outlook Task Force.

President Rowlett expressed his gratitude for the vast amount of time and effort that Mr. Jeffries gives to conservation issues not only for the state of Kentucky but for the Southeast as well.

KACD Auxiliary Report - Ms. Betty Barrick presented the report. The fourteen (14) posters are still lost in the mail. Since this year's top three (3) winners cannot be determined it was decided that each of the fourteen (14) participants will receive a ten (10) dollar cash prize.

Ms. Phyllis Lacy will act as interim treasurer until the annual meeting. Ms. Lacy is filling the void created by Ms. Phyllis Amyx's passing.

The scholarship application deadline has been extended until the end of March. A Scholarship Committee has been set up to review all of the applications and will be meeting the day before the May board meeting to determine the winners.

A special thank-you is extended to Breckinridge County for quilting this year's project quilt at no charge to the Auxiliary.

President Rowlett publicly recognized Ms. Barrick for all of the hard work she has done with the Auxiliary and the scholarship program.

2015 KACD State Convention - University Plaza Holiday Inn, July 19-21 - President David Rowlett began the discussion with the topic of determining the program schedule for the upcoming convention.

Agenda - Sunday, July 19th - Afternoon: A tour of Lee Robey's Dairy Farm in Logan County is scheduled for 2:00 p.m. with registration beginning at noon. Ms. Kim Richardson recommended a 1:00 p.m. departure time. Estimated travel time will be 45 minutes. Ms. Richardson believes there will be more than fifty (50) persons, the number of passengers a bus may transport, to register for the event thereby creating a need for a minimum of two (2) buses. She gave a registration cutoff date of July 1st to determine the actual number of buses that will be required. Mr. Kevin Jeffries suggested having ice water available to participants due to the length of travel and actual tour time that will be required.

Sunday - Evening: Note: *attendees will be responsible for their own meals on Sunday evening.* The Soil Stewardship Program will be presented. Mr. Kevin Jeffries will check with Mr. Brian Hacker about presenting his stewardship program, which was extremely successful at the last NACD Convention. Mr. Jeffries estimated this presentation to be twenty (20) minutes. Mr. Jeff Rice suggested Ms. Judy Miller, Ms. Ruthie Pike's sister, as another possibility for a speaker. She is an educator and career missionary in Africa who grew up on a farm and is currently stationed stateside. Mr. Rice will check to see if she will be available in July. At this point she is considered to be the first choice for speaker in this time slot, contingent on her availability, with Mr. Hacker as an alternate, with the possibility of scheduling him at a later time during the convention. For the entertainment portion Mr. Allan Bryant suggested contacting musician Mr. David Stahl. Ms. Richardson thought Mr. Stahl's fee to be under three hundred dollars (\$300) for a thirty (30) minute performance. Ms. Richardson will contact Mr. Stahl about his availability. Mr. Orville Bennett also suggested a former student, Ms. Lindsey Overbee, as a possibility for entertainment. Ms. Overbee won the State FFA Talent Contest. She also placed in the top fifteen (15) at the National FFA Talent Contest. Ms. Overbee sang several sets at the National Convention. Ms. Overbee is adept at singing various genres of music. Mr. Bennett will check as to her availability for the summer. First choice for Sunday evening's entertainment will be Mr. Stahl and have Ms. Overbee considered for another time slot in the program.

Monday, July 20th - Morning: The Leadership (Supervisor's) Breakfast with a presentation possibly given by Mr. Warren Beeler who is with the KY Department of Agriculture.

Monday Morning's Opening Session: Ms. Beverly Buchanan with the Warren County Conservation District confirmed that the County Judge will be available for this session. President Rowlett suggested also asking the Warren County District Chairman to participate as a speaker. Ms. Buchanan will check with him. Ms. Buchanan also added that Ms. Roby Carson has been lined up to sing the national anthem. Ms. Buchanan currently has a call in with a local high school R.O.T.C. program about presenting

the colors but has not yet received a commitment from them. She also has calls in with the Judge's office and local Chamber of Commerce for donations for giveaways/gift bags.

Other possible speakers for the remainder of the Monday morning session will be gubernatorial candidates, one of whom is James R. Comer, the current Kentucky Commissioner of Agriculture. Ms. Richardson will contact these persons with KACD's request.

Monday at Noon: The Resolutions Committee will meet, which is comprised of all the board members.

Monday Afternoon: The Soil Health Forum will meet from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. including a break. This will take the place of most of the usual breakout sessions; however, some educational sessions will still be made available for the employees who do not wish to attend the forum. For one of these sessions Ms. Richardson has scheduled Arthur and Cindy Dunn. Ms. Richardson stated that both she and State Conservationist Karen Woodrich, NRCS, have been discussing the possibility of opening up the forum to farmers and charging them a minimal registration fee of five (\$5) to ten (\$10) dollars to attend. Ms. Woodrich has access to a grant which would refund the registration fee of all participants. Space will not be an issue since the forum will be held in the main meeting room. President Rowlett stated that this was one of the best and most informative talks he has ever attended and is glad that it will be presented at the convention.

Monday Evening: Note: attendees will be responsible for their own meals on Monday evening. The Awards Presentation will be hosted followed by the Auction.

Tuesday, July 21st - Morning: The Auxiliary and RC & D Breakfasts. Ms. Richardson will check with RC & D to confirm if they are in fact hosting their breakfast. The Business Session will be held at 10:00 a.m. President Rowlett stated that we need to allow time for attendees to get back to their hotel rooms and checked-out by 11:00 am. He added that due to time constraints he felt that speakers would not be needed during this portion of the schedule. Ms. Richardson stated that DOC usually hosts something for the district employees, and NRCS does something as well for their employees. Mr. Ted Jessup suggested having some breakout sessions which run concurrently with the Business Meeting since this meeting is not open to everyone. Mr. Jessup added that he would like to see a session addressing watersheds and their watershed boards. He cited everything that has resulted from HB 1 as his reason for this particular training. Mr. Jessup added that he felt KACD was failing the watershed boards in providing them with information. Ultimately, a session providing basic information to the watershed boards would be beneficial in solidifying the districts and the watersheds in our common purpose. Ms. Richardson stated that the Department for Natural Resources is currently working on a better system for the watersheds so this is a very timely subject.

Tuesday at Noon: Ms. Richardson suggested the luncheon begin at 12:30 p.m. rather than 12:00 p.m. to allow for checking-out at the hotel. President Rowlett estimates the total time for the luncheon will be two (2) hours. The luncheon segment would include: award presentations; the announcement of the KACD Auxiliary's scholarship winners and the quilt raffle winner (Ms. Betty Barrick stated that her portion would take approximately ten (10) minutes); and the Leopold Award presentation (President Rowlett estimated with the video and speeches this portion would require thirty (30) minutes).

Ms. Richardson estimated the overall cost for the luncheon to be between eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) to nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) for a buffet. A regular menu (non-buffet) would possibly run around seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500). She added that a lunch menu, since it is more economically priced than a dinner menu, could be upgraded.

The board decided to contact radio personality, Mr. Jeff Nalley, for the speaker at the banquet luncheon. Ms. Richardson said she would contact Mr. Nalley and check his availability. As an added incentive Mr. Jeff Rice suggested offering Mr. Nalley a booth from which he could air his radio program.

President Rowlett requested a draft of this schedule be given to all board members for them to look over and see if they are in agreement with it. Ms. Richardson affirmed this would be done. The board agreed that after the convention the newly implemented schedule would have to be revisited and reviewed to determine its effectiveness and to decide if it should be allowed to continue.

Registration - The registration cut-off date will be July 1st. It was determined that a banquet ticket would be included in with the cost of registration. Ms. Kim Richardson estimated the cost of the banquet luncheon to be thirty (\$30) to thirty-five dollars (\$35). The board decided to keep the Lee Roby Dairy Farm Tour and breakfast fees separate from the registration fee and the tickets for these events to be sold at cost. Mr. Jeff Rice made the motion to charge one hundred and forty dollars (\$140) for the registration fee. Mr. Kevin Jeffries seconded the motion. **Motion carried.** Additional pertinent information from this discussion

is as follows: hotel room charges per night will be one hundred and twenty-nine dollars (\$129); the hotel contract calls for, and locks in, one hundred and sixty-nine rooms; place a clause, in writing, on all room reservations that there will be no refunds given; and bus rental fees two (2) years ago was nine hundred and fifty dollars (\$950) per bus (Ms. Richardson stated she would not be able to schedule the bus rentals until after July 1st).

Displays - Counties will be given tables at no additional charge (fees are covered with their registration). There are however a limited number of these tables. The question was asked if there would be an extra fee for the use of electricity. Ms. Richardson stated that she would have to refer to the hotel contract. This will be discussed further at the May meeting.

Corporate Sponsorships - The top tier for corporate sponsorship at last year's convention was set at five thousand dollars (\$5,000). However, only one (1) of these was purchased (Farm Bureau). The perks for being a platinum (top tier) sponsor are: having the company/organization name/emblem placed on the convention program brochure; flashings on all power points during breaks; and a spot on the program. Approximately seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) for corporate sponsorship was raised at last year's convention. The board suggested the following new amounts for corporate sponsorship: Platinum - \$2,500; Gold - \$1,500; Silver - \$1,000; and Bronze - \$500. Mr. Rod Murphy made the motion to adopt the new sponsorship levels. Mr. Alan Bryant seconded the motion. **Motion carried.** President Rowlett requested that any additional ideas for sponsors be submitted in writing to Ms. Richardson or to him as soon as possible. Please include names and addresses and Ms. Terri Shaw, Franklin County Conservation District, will draft a letter to contact these by mail. President Rowlett added that most corporations, before they will act on such a request, require something in writing. Farm Credit was mentioned as being generous when it comes to sponsoring events and therefore might be a good possibility for sponsoring one of the breakfasts. Mr. Jeff Rice added that face-to-face contact will go a long way in securing sponsorship commitments.

Report on Area Spring Meetings - *Area 3:* Mr. Bobbie Wilson reported that the meeting went really well. He felt that the weather was to blame for a lower than normal attendance. There were no new resolutions. Mr. Wilson added that it was good to have President Rowlett in attendance.

Area 6: Mr. Gilbert Edgington reported that it was a good meeting and well attended. There were no new resolutions. A local judge was the guest speaker.

Area 7: Mr. David Cowherd reported that the meeting was held in Somerset and that he was pleased to have President Rowlett in attendance for the second year in a row. There were no new resolutions. Mr. Cowherd stated that as an odd number county he held an election for his position, in which he is completing his third two (2) year term, the maximum allowed. Mr. Rodney Dick, Board Chairman in Pulaski County, was elected to this post and will begin sitting in on the KACD meetings as Area 7 representative on September 8th. Ms. Kim Richardson reported that Mr. Barney Denny will serve as alternate.

NACD Fly-In March 17-18 - President Rowlett reported that next week Ms. Kim Richardson, Mr. Shane Wells, Mr. Allan Bryant, Mr. Lenville Martin, as well as himself, would be flying out on Monday morning at 6:15 a.m. to Washington DC and returning Tuesday evening at 9:37 p.m.

Division of Conservation Report - Director Kim Richardson, DOC, presented the report. Ms. Richardson began by saying she is currently working towards getting an updated KACD Standing Committees list out. Assistant Director Johnna McHugh, DOC, has gone through the list removing anyone who is no longer employed, no longer on the board, or has passed away.

2015 General Assembly Update: HB 510 is now in the Senate Ag Committee. If it passes intact then it is slated to put \$5 million into the State Cost Share Fund. Ms. Richardson believes this bill has a good chance of coming out of committee and on to a vote. She also informed board members that during the general assembly you may go to **ky.gov** under "Bill Watch" which will allow you to enter in the bill number you are interested in and you will automatically receive updates by e-mail on any changes as they are happening.

DOC has been granted permission to hire a new field rep. The new rep will be located in Perry County. Mr. Jay Nelson, Environmental Scientist, has been acting field rep for the last two (2) years. Mr. Nelson will now be working closely with State Cost Share, 319 Funds, and the upcoming RCPP Program. While Ms. Richardson was hoping this would be implemented by April 1st it is more likely to be completed April 16th. With the new hire will come a shifting of county responsibilities for all of the reps. The goal is to have each rep more centrally located within their designated regions. Ms. Richardson, in answering a concern presented by Mr. Rod Murphy, stated that her next project would be bolstering the western end of the state. Ms. Richardson in answering an additional question from Mr. David Cowherd said that the field reps would continue to attend every other meeting due to DOC travel budget constraints. She added that if a future budget cut is ever required of the division then

it will have to be taken from the travel budget since it is DOC's only discretionary funding. President Rowlett emphasized the importance of all the districts contacting their local legislators concerning the FY 2016 budget.

Agency Comment

Natural Resources Conservation Service - State Conservationist Karen Woodrich, NRCS, was unable to attend the meeting but did forward some information for the meeting. President Rowlett began by distributing an information sheet explaining the newly signed MOA concerning Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP). This is "a competitive grants program that helps state and tribal governments increase public access to private lands for wildlife - dependent recreation..." These grants are only available to state and tribal governments to be used for "private forest, farm, or ranch lands." Ms. Kim Richardson, in continuing Ms. Woodrich's report, stated that Ms. Woodrich is appreciative for KACD's assistance with the MOU over the past years.

NRCS currently has teams in the field, especially in Eastern Kentucky, working on the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP) evaluating water damage reports. Due to the reorganization and heavy workload, any district staff that is made available to assist with the (EWPP) implementation will receive training and compensation from NRCS. If interested you may contact your assistant state conservationist's field operations.

NRCS's administrative transformation is in full swing by nationally realigning its business and administrative workforce. All contracting and agreement, property and procurement, leasing, hiring, and employee relations issues will now be handled by a national team. For Kentucky that means eight (8) administrative staff members will be moved to these national teams and no longer work exclusively for the state. Three (3) new positions however have been established as local support staff for Kentucky. They are: Assistant State Conservationist for Management and Strategy; Business and Finance Specialist; and Business Leader. Until this alteration is completed the response time for many tasks will be more than doubled.

Assistant Director Paulette Akers, Division of Compliance Assistance, has tentatively scheduled an Ag and Environmental Boot Camp for May 14, 2015 at the 300 Fair Oaks Building in Frankfort. This will give an overview of the permitting process (i.e. when you need a permit, when you don't, and which permit you actually need). Some of the topics to be discussed will be: Ag Water Quality Plans; Solid Waste; Pesticides; Air etc.

Work continues on finalizing the MOA regarding Regional Conservation Partnership Program's "Managing Poo" proposal.

Mr. Jack Kuhn will be participating in the NACD Fly-In next week (March 17th - 18th) in Washington.

The Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI) is in its final year of dedicated funding. There is approximately \$10 million remaining for twelve (12) MRBI states. Kentucky has already submitted some new watershed projects for consideration.

After Ms. Richardson's presentation of the report discussion ensued relating to NRCS's shifting of responsibilities from the local to the national level. Mr. Kevin Jeffries stated that this topic needs to be pressed by those involved with next week's fly-in. He added that this issue would be a primary point of discussion during Wednesday's southeast conference call. Mr. Jeffries in answering a question said that this is not the result of any bill that has passed but is merely an administrative decision from the leadership in Washington.

Kentucky Department for Natural Resources - Deputy Commissioner Sandy Gruzesky, DNR, was not in attendance.

Farm Service Agency - Mr. John McCauley, State FSA Director, was not in attendance.

University of Kentucky - Dr. Steve Higgins was not in attendance.

Kentucky Department of Agriculture - Mr. Steve Kelly was not in attendance.

Division of Forestry - Ms. Leah MacSwords, Director, was not in attendance.

KACDE - Ms. Leslie Fourqurean was not in attendance.

Other Business - Ms. Beverly Buchanan, Warren County Conservation District, asked the board if there would be compensation for Ms. Roby Carson who is singing the national anthem. President Rowlett requested a motion be made concerning this as

well as reimbursement for the color guard. For comparison purposes at last year's convention the color guard from Carroll County was reimbursed one hundred dollars (\$100) per trip, of which they made two for a total of two hundred dollars (\$200). President Rowlett clarified that the money cannot be directly donated to the R.O.T.C. program but has to be presented to the high school with which the R.O.T.C. program is associated. This year it will only be necessary for the color guard to make one trip. The person who was slated to sing the national anthem last year was unable to attend so there was zero dollars (\$0) spent. Ms. Buchanan stated that Ms. Carson is from Warren County and hopefully (she has yet to receive confirmation) the color guard will be local also. Mr. Rod Murphy requested that Ms. Buchanan obtain more information from Ms. Carson and present her findings to the board and a vote for Ms. Carson's compensation be postponed until the May meeting. Mr. David Cowherd made the motion to donate one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) to the high school with which the R.O.T.C. color guard is connected. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gilbert Edgington. **Motion carried.**

Adjournment - A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ted Jessup. Motion seconded by Mr. David Cowherd. **Motion carried,** meeting adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

Next Board Meeting - The next meeting will convene on **May 12th at 9:30 a.m. in Frankfort at the Department of Natural Resources Building located at 2 Hudson Hollow Road.** The remainder of the 2015 Meeting Schedule is as follows:

July 19th -21st at the KACD Convention in Bowling Green

September 8th

November 10th

*Unless otherwise indicated all meetings will be held at 2 Hudson Hollow Road in Frankfort
on the second Tuesday of the month at 9:30 a.m.*